

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LAGOS 01185 301647Z

47

ACTION SS-15

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ISO-00 SSO-00 CCO-00 OPR-02 A-01 OC-05

CPR-01 SY-05 /036 W

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R 291621Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3085

C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 1185

STADIS////////////////////////////////////

AF FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY SCHAUFLE FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP, ASEC, ATRN, NI

SUBJECT: SECRETARY KISSINGER'S PROPOSED VISIT TO NIGERIA

REF: LAGOS 660

1. AS USIS WIRELESS FILE JANUARY 26 REAFFIRMS SECRETARY'S INTENT TO VISIT AFRICA AND NAMES SPECIFIC COUNTRIES, INCLUDING NIGERIA, WE ARE PREPARED TO MOVE AHEAD WITH PREPARATORY PLANNING AS SOON AS YOU AUTHORIZE US TO DO SO. WE WOULD OF COURSE APPRECIATE RECEIVING SPECIFIC DATES, LENGTH OF VISIT IN NIGERIA, NUMBER IN PARTY, ETC. AS SOON AS AVAILABLE.

2. A FUNDAMENTAL QUESTION IN THIS TRAFFIC-CHOKED CITY IS HOW TO GET A VIP VISITOR THE 16 MILES FROM AIRPORT TO DODAN BARRACKS AND BACK. HEAD OF STATE MUHAMMED MAKES A POINT OF NEVER USING OUTRIDERS TO CLEAR THE WAY FOR HIM AS GOWON USED TO DO TO THE WIDESPREAD ANNOYANCE OF CITIZENS ON THE ROAD; WE BELIEVE IT WOULD BE UNACCEPTABLE TO REQUEST ROADS BE CLEARED FOR THE SECRETARY. AMIN WAS BROUGHT TO DODAN BY HELICOPTER, AND WE CONSIDER THIS THE ONLY PRACTICAL MODE OF TRANSPORT FOR THE SECRETARY; AIRPORT TRIP BY CAR USUALLY TAKES FROM ONE AND ONE-HALF TO THREE HOURS. WE THEREFORE RECOMMEND THAT SY AGREE TO SECRETARY'S TRAVEL BY HELICOPTER. PRINCIPAL OPTIONS
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PAGE 02 LAGOS 01185 301647Z

APPEAR TO BE:

A. 16 SEAT NIGERIAN AIR FORCE PUMA HELICOPTER (NAF HAS TWO),
PILOTED BY NAF PILOTS.

B. 5-SEAT BELL G5- A HELICOPTER LEASED BY THE NIGERIAN POLICE
AND OPERATEDBY PAN AFRICAN AIRLINES, WHICH CURRENTLY PROVIDES
WACASC SUPPLY PLANE UNDER AIR TRANSPORT CONTRACT WITH USG.
PILOTS WOULD BE AMERICAN.

C. 4-5 SEAT HELICOPTERS OF VARIOUS TYPES BELONGING TO OTHER
PRIVATE AERO CONTRACTORS OR US OIL COMPANIES. PILOTS COULD BE
AMERICAN.

D. US MILITARY HELICOPTER. NONE AVAILABLE LOCALLY; WOULD HAVE
TO BE BROUGHT IN FOR THE OCCASION. IT COULD BE AWKWARD TO
PURSUE THIS OPTION IF FMG OFFERS OR PREFERS TO HAVE US USE NAF
PUMA.

3. OPTION A. IS RECOMMENDED AND COULD PROBABLY BE NEGOTIATED
BETWEEN EMBASSY, MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS AND MINISTRY OF
DEFENSE.WOULD APPRECIATE WASHINGTON GUIDANCE ON ABOVE QUESTION
AS WELL AS INDICATION OF HOW MANY OF SECRETARY'S PARTY HE WOULD
WANT TO HAVE WITH HIM ON THESE FLIGHTS.

4. DEPARTMENT MAY WISH CONSIDER SENDING ADVANCE PARTY TO REVIEW
THESE OPTIONS ON GROUND HERE.

5. WE HAVE DISCUSSED THESE QUESTIONS WITH JIM BLAKE, WHO
CONCURS IN SUBSTANCE OF THIS MESSAGE.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 29 JAN 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976LAGOS01185
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760036-0158
From: LAGOS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760110/aaaaaihd.tel
Line Count: 91
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Reference: 76 LAGOS 660
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 06 JUL 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <06 JUL 2004 by ellisoob>; APPROVED <14 OCT 2004 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SECRETARY KISSINGER'S PROPOSED VISIT TO NIGERIA
TAGS: OVIP, ASEC, ATRN, NI, (KISSINGER, HENRY A)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006